



October 9, 2013

## TESTIMONY REGARDING MICHIGAN COUNCIL FOR EDUCATOR EFFECTIVENESS

AFT Michigan thanks the House Education Committee for the opportunity to testify today. In our shared goal of improving education for Michigan's children, AFT Michigan recommends that the state legislature adopt the recommendations of the Michigan Council for Educator Effectiveness (MCEE) in its final report released in July 2013 in their entirety.

Meaningful teacher evaluation systems are complex and the thoroughness of the MCEE's report is a testament to its commitment to a high quality system in Michigan. MCEE's recommendations synthesize the conclusions of leading educational researchers and offer greater clarity for the evaluation process in Michigan by:

- Identifying that the core principle behind a strong teacher evaluation system is to improve teaching and learning by developing excellent educators;
- Standardizing the quality of evaluation tools and providing clear guidelines for implementing these tools for evaluating professional practice;
- Offering a balanced approach for incorporating student growth measures into performance evaluations.

We strongly urge policy makers to adopt the MCEE's recommendations in full. Altering the structure and components of the recommended program risks compromising the report's key principles.

Implementing a strong evaluation system will require additional state resources. Significant funding commitments must be made to training and support for the implantation and use of the evaluation tool, development of student growth measures, and training on student learning objectives (SLOs). If our state is serious about improving teaching and learning, then our legislators must make the commitment to sustainable funding for teacher evaluations.

To ensure that the teacher evaluation program is focused on improvement and the development of teaching practice, AFT Michigan supports the MCEE's finding that a three-category ranking system, with ratings of *Professional*, *Provisional*, and *Ineffective*, is a necessary change from the current four-category system.

Teacher input will play an important role in ensuring our state's evaluation system is implemented with fidelity. AFT Michigan strongly recommends that the legislature allow educators to participate in these decisions through the collective bargaining process.

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